

Minutes
Morganton Planning & Zoning and City Council Workshop
September 11th, 2014

Members Present:

Hank Dickens, Chairman
Bill Lennon, Vice-Chairman
Waits Gordon
Doris Smith
Pete Wallace
Rick Lingerfelt
Kim Woolard
Judy Francis
Don Smith

Members Absent:

David Kirk
Claude Huffman

City Council Present:

Mel L. Cohen
John H. Cantrell
Sidney Simmons
Ronnie Thompson
Forrest A. Fleming

Also present from the City staff were Lee Anderson, Director Development Design Services; Louis Vinay, City Attorney; Sally Sandy, City Manager; Scott Hildebran, Assist. City Manager; Russ Cochran, Planner; Terry Jordan, Zoning Administrator; Joshua Harris, Public Information Officer; Michael Berley, Project Engineer; Kelly Russell, Recording Secretary City Council and Jackie Cain, Recording Secretary Planning Commission.

Others: Benchmark Planning Consultants present, Erin Burris and Vagn Hansen

I. Welcome

Mr. Dickens called Morganton Planning and Zoning Commission to order.

Mr. Cohen called City of Morganton City Council to order.

Mr. Anderson stated Mission 2030 was adopted October 5, 2009 as Morganton's Long-term Vision Plan. He stated the primary task of Mission 2030 was to Integrate Economic Development Planning with Land Use Planning and to provide Morganton a competitive advantage in a global market place.



Mr. Anderson discussed how Industry, Retail, Tourism, and Education would be balanced with groups in the community.

Mr. Anderson stated our task is balanced economic growth that benefits the community and protects our quality of life.

Mr. Anderson reviewed each area with Commission and Council.

Retain, Support & Recruit Industry



- Encourage expansion and growth of existing industries
- Recruit technology and growth industries
- Support growth of healthcare industry
- Maintain communication and relationships with existing industries
- Conserve land for manufacturing and business development
- Encourage partnerships and co-location of key agencies supporting economic development

Expand Retail



- Attract local and national retailers through new recruitment techniques
- Maintain a strong and diverse central business district
- Support partnerships that grow retail
- Invest in corridor enhancements to support commercial development
- Encourage new ordinances and guidelines that are business friendly
- Revitalize existing commercial centers
- Market identified locations for commercial development

Embrace Tourism



- Recognize tourism as a local growth industry
- Support business that promotes visitors to the area
- Create a strong brand as 'Nature's Playground'
- Invest in and promote corridor and gateway enhancements
- Improve hospitality training opportunities
- Promote Downtown as a visitor attraction
- Promote River District as a destination
- Encourage events that bring visitors to the area
- Network within region to bring national attractions to the area
- Create wayfinding programs

Diversify Neighborhoods

- Promote diverse housing types
- Diversify housing choices
- Promote retirement living
- Support downtown housing
- Encourage development of infill housing
- Identify and protect historic neighborhoods
- Promote mixed use living opportunities

Mr. Anderson discussed the existing ordinance. He stated the current ordinance

- Antiquated Approach to Managing Land Use (1960's)
- Doesn't address today's goals and policies
- Not a User Friendly Document
- Slows Down the Development Process
- Discourages Creative Development
- Encourages Non-Creative Development
- Compromises the City's Appearance Goals
- Makes Adaptive Reuse very challenging
- Generally not flexible enough to encourage Econ Develop.

Ms. Burris, Benchmark, reviewed Major Changes with Commission.

She stated the new ordinance would eliminate existing zoning districts.

RLL, RL, RLMF, RM, RH, RHS, RT, OI, CB, NB, GB, LI, HI

Eliminates Conditional Use Districts (existing CU approvals remain in effect)

Ms. Burris introduces 6 New Zoning Districts. She explains the new zoning districts are intensity based. The following are the new districts.

Low Intensity	(LID)
Medium Intensity	(MID)
High Intensity	(HID)
Central Business	(CBD)
Exclusive Industrial	(EID)
State Institutional	(SID)

Ms. Burris stated Low Intensity District is primarily single-family residential at a variety of densities and depending on location and proximity to transportation corridors and services. She stated certain types of nonresidential community facilities and services that would not be detrimental to the residential character of the district.

Ms. Burris stated Medium Intensity District includes a variety of medium to high density residential. She stated the low to medium intensity includes civic, institutional, office, service, and retail uses designed to keep the impact on adjacent residential areas at a minimum.

Ms. Burris stated High Intensity District allows a variety of civic, institutional, retail, service and office uses. She stated the high intensity districts will be along major arterials to ensure these uses are attractive, functional, and do not have a harmful effect on adjacent neighborhoods or other commercial areas of the City.

Ms. Burris stated Central Business District promotes the continued vitality of downtown Morganton. She stated concentration of activities in a pedestrian-oriented setting. Retail trade, office and professional service uses.

Ms. Burris stated Exclusive Industrial District consists of manufacturing, warehousing, transportation, utility and similar uses. She stated further growth of nonindustrial development is prohibited to preserve land for industrial purposes.

Ms. Burris stated State Institutional District contains a variety of institutional and governmental uses on land owned by the State of North Carolina.

Ms. Burris stated there would be 4 new zoning overlay districts

- Neighborhood Conservation (NC-O)
- Manufactured Home (MH-O)
- Corridor (C-O)
- River District (RD-O)

She stated the following overlays would be maintained:

- Flood Damage Prevention
- Airport/Heliport Protection
- Watershed Protection
- Phase 2 Storm Water Management

Ms. Burris explained each overlay district, beginning with Neighborhood Conservation. She stated conserve neighborhoods in LID and MID districts.

Ms. Burris stated Manufactured Home district allows for manufactured homes on individual lots. She stated the manufactured home must be constructed after July 13, 1994 with HUD wind ratings. She stated the home must be at least 24 x 40 feet and also must have a minimum roof pitch. Residential exterior materials and masonry foundation must be used. She stated the towing apparatus would have to be removed and the home would be installed to NC Department of Insurance standards.

Mr. Dickens asked if manufactured homes which are prior to July 13, 1994 become non-conforming. He also asked if staff knew how many units would be nonconforming.

Mr. Lingerfelt questioned horizontal siding.

Mr. Anderson stated without changes made, single wide mobile homes would be allowed.

Commission and Council discussed amortization of removal of single wide trailers.

Clear definition of manufactured home park.

Ms. Burris stated Corridor & River District maintains to enhance appearance of main thoroughfares and promote stable attractive economic development that does not interfere with future road improvements. She stated performance standards would be a step above

base standards...landscaping and fencing, sidewalks, building design, parking placement, access management and right-of-way reservation, and utility placement and mechanical equipment screening.

Ms. Burris discussed major changes which would be presented in the new ordinance. She reviewed the following:

- **Introduces a New Table of Permitted Uses** (Groups Broader Land Use Categories that provides specific references to conditions required of each use.

Discussion regarding livestock .

- **Eliminates significant amounts of the City's Extra-Territorial Jurisdiction (ETJ)**

Mr. Anderson commented that the current area for the City which includes the ETJ, was 38 square miles. The new area will be 25 square miles, he added service to 6,000 properties verses 11,000.

Mr. Scott Carpenter, Burke County Planning Director, stated Burke County had no concerns regarding.

- **Introduces greater land use flexibility for property owners** within areas where compatible uses can co-exist if performance conditions can be met to protect the surrounding properties.
- **Introduces additional Conditions for more Intensive Land Uses**
- **Introduces New Minimum Street Access standards**
- **Provides density bonuses for New Multi-family** if improved design through performance points can be obtained.
- **Introduces new non-residential performance standards** various site and building design requirements based on particular site location (i.e. Corridor district, River District, Central District, LID, MID, HID)
- **Standards include access limitations**, landscaping, buffering, parking configuration, sidewalk installation, building design and lighting standards based on use.
- **Introduces new sign ordinance** standards for residential, charitable and non-residential uses.
- **Introduces new nonconforming use** guidelines and certificates of nonconformity adjustment by the board of adjustment.
- **Revises and simplifies** the site development review procedures.
- **Introduces improved ordinance graphics**, examples, user friendly tables and an expanded definitions section.
- **Introduces a Process for Alternative Design Approval** through City Council.

Ms. Burris discussed Residential Density Bonuses. She explained these are permance-based and density can be increased based upon landscaping, open space, infrastructure and building design.

Ms. Burris discussed Nonresidential Development. She provided examples of these for commission and council.

Ms. Burris discussed signage and regulations.

- Signs which do not require a permit.
- One Temporary freestanding sign allowed per lot.
- Wall signs area 10% of building wall up to a maximum depending on zoning district.
- An increase in freestanding sign area and number allowed with increase in tenants up to a maximum depending on district
- Reduction in overall sign height
- Encased pole signs with a maximum width to height ratio
- Interstate signs allowed

Ms. Burris discussed Nonconformities.

- In general the following circumstances trigger bringing a nonconforming development site into compliances:
 - Substantial change of use
 - Change in Zoning Classification
 - Expansion of 20 percent or greater of an existing use, structure, or parking area.
- Certificates on Nonconformity Adjustment-Board of Adjustment can review circumstances to allow the modification of a non-conforming situation
- Nonconforming signs allowed to remain with a change in sign face if a street yard is installed.

Motion to adjourn.